

Department of State

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DURING COURTESY CALL ON GROMYKO AT 4:00 P.. TODAY, HE INTRODUCED SUBJECT OF CUBA, SAYING THAT SOVIET GOVERNMENT WISHED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT PURSUANT TO KENNEDY-KHRUSHCHEV EXCHANGE OF LETTERS. AGREEMENT SHOULD "CODIFY" OBLIGATIONS OF BOTH SIDES.

SOVIET GOVERNMENT EXPECTS US WILL TAKE STEPS TO BRING NEGOTIATIONS QUICKLY TO SATISFACTORY END. GROMYKO SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO ENTER UPON SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION THIS MATTER NOW, JUST WANTED TO MENTION IT IN PASSING.

I SAID THAT, WHILE I HAD NO INTENTION TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT, IT WAS CLEAR OUR GOVERNMENT DESIRED AND INTENDED TO PROCEED AS SWIFTLY AS POSSIBLE TO OVERCOME CRISIS. PRESIDENT REGARDS EXCHANGE OF LETTERS WITH KHRUSHCHEV AS CONSTITUTING AGREEMENT ON BASIC PRINCIPLES INVOLVED, ON BASIS OF WHICH QUESTION WAS PROMPT EXECUTION OF OBLIGATIONS. SO FAR AS SPEED OF NEGOTIATIONS WAS CONCERNED, THE FASTER THE BETTER, BUT TALK SHOULD NOT DELAY ACTION.

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